



## **RICS New Rules of Conduct (effective 2 February 2022) – FAQs related to entry and assessment to the profession**

FAQs Version	1.1
Date	11 October 2021

### **Background**

This set of FAQs captures questions which may arise from candidates, assessors, counsellors, employers, and education providers relating to the impact of the new Rules of Conduct on entry and assessment to the profession.

The existing Rules of Conduct in place for RICS members and regulated firms since 2007, have been updated following research and a membership wide consultation at the end of 2020.

The new Rules will launch on **11 October 2021** with an effective date of **2 February 2022**, and replace the following:

- Rules of Conduct for Members
- Rules of Conduct for Firms
- Global Professional and Ethical Standards.

The Rules of Conduct are mandatory standards of professional conduct and practice expected of all RICS members, candidates, students, and regulated firms.

There are five new Rules which have been updated to address challenges relating to sustainability, the use of data, and diversity and inclusion. The new Rules are based on the ethical principles of honesty, integrity, competence, service, respect, and responsibility.

The changes are intended to help the global profession respond to new risks and opportunities.



## 1) **What are the new Rules of Conduct?**

1. Members and firms must be honest, act with integrity and comply with their professional obligations, including obligations to RICS
2. Members and firms must maintain their professional competence and ensure that services are provided by competent individuals who have the necessary expertise
3. Members and firms must provide good-quality and diligent service
4. Members and firms must treat others with respect and encourage diversity and inclusion
5. Members and firms must act in the public interest, take responsibility for their actions and act to prevent harm and maintain public confidence in the profession

The Rules of Conduct are based on ethical principles of honesty, integrity, competence, service, respect, and responsibility.

## 2) **I am a candidate and due to take my final assessment before 2 February 2022. What does this mean for me?**

Whilst it is important you are aware of the changes, all candidates taking the Chartered or Associate assessment prior to the 2 February 2022 will continue to be tested on the current set of documents:

- Rules of conduct for Members
- Rules of Conduct for Firms
- Global Professional and Ethical Standards.

The “Ethics, Rules of Conduct and professionalism” competency will continue to be mandatory to Level 3 for all Chartered assessments, and mandatory for all Associate assessments.

As this competency requires you to have a thorough knowledge of RICS regulations and Rules of Conduct, you should have an awareness of the new Rules and the date they will be effective.



**3) I am a candidate and planning to take my final assessment after 2 February 2022. What does this mean for me?**

You will be tested on the new Rules of Conduct, which are effective from 2 February 2022.

You will need to consider this when completing your written submissions and statement for the “Ethics, Rules of Conduct and professionalism” competency, which will continue to be mandatory to Level 3 for all Chartered assessments. Associate candidates are not required to complete a written submission for the competency as this will be tested via the RICS online ethics module.

We understand that for some candidates there will be crossover between the current suite of documents and the new Rules. If you submit your written submissions prior to 2 February 2022, but then sit your assessment after the effective date, the assessors will be asked to take this into account.

If you submit your written submission after 2 February 2022 any evidence on the *Ethics, Rules of Conduct and professionalism* competency must be based on the new Rules.

**4) Will there be changes to the current online ethics module?**

Yes.

The current online ethics module – *Professional Ethics for RICS Members* – includes references to the 2007 Rules of Conduct and the five global ethical principles.

In line with the new Rules, the module will be replaced with a new version from 2 February 2022. Access to the current module will no longer be available from then.

**5) I am a candidate and have already completed the online ethics module. Is my result still valid?**

Yes, for a time period.

Currently, all candidates joining RICS must successfully complete the online ethics module *Professional Ethics for RICS Members* within 12 months of their final assessment.

Candidates who have successfully completed the current module prior to 2 February 2022 do not need to take the new version if they pass their assessment within 12 months of completing the current module.

**6) I am a candidate and have already completed the online ethics module. Can I take the new version?**

Yes, when it's available from 2 February 2022.

However, if you decide to take the new version for the purposes of your assessment, this will void your original ethics module result and you would need to pass the new version to be eligible to submit for assessment.



To avoid any potential delay to you submitting for assessment we recommend you use the support materials and guidance available [here](#) to develop your competence on the new Rules.

### **7) Do I need to complete the new version of the module?**

If you enrol onto an RICS assessment or apply through a direct entry route after 2 February 2022, you will need to complete the new version of the module.

If you have completed the current version, you will only need to undertake the new version if you do not pass your assessment within 12 months of the date you originally completed the module.

### **8) Will there be other changes to the online ethics module?**

Yes.

RICS has collaborated with qualified professionals around the world, as well as seeking input from outside the profession, to create new content which reflects the role of professionalism and the new Rules of Conduct.

The new *RICS Professionalism module* will be a mandatory requirement to achieve professional status when it launches on 2 February 2022. The module will feature a completely new e-learning section with more interactive material, including a "choose your own adventure" case study. The assessment element of the module will feature a "complex" case study and 20 multiple choice questions (MCQs).

As with the current module, it will take approximately three hours to complete. More information will be available later this summer.

### **9) Is the ethics competency changing?**

The "Ethics, Rules of Conduct and professionalism" competency will continue to be mandatory to Level 3 for all Chartered assessments, and mandatory for all Associate assessments.

This competency requires you to understand the role of RICS, including a thorough knowledge of its regulations and Rules of Conduct.

The competency description and examples of the likely skills, knowledge and experience required to achieve the competency will be updated from 2 February 2022 to reflect the new Rules of Conduct and terminology. Candidates and assessors should continue to refer to the current competency description in the meantime.



### **10) I am an Assessor; what should I be assessing candidates on and what support from RICS is available?**

As an RICS-qualified professional, you will need to be familiar with the new Rules of Conduct, the changes to the current suite of documents, and the effective date.

The “Ethics, Rules of Conduct and professionalism” competency will continue to be mandatory to Level 3 for all Chartered assessments, and mandatory for all Associate assessments. Associate candidates are not required to complete a written submission for the competency as this will be tested via the RICS online ethics module.

#### **Assessments before 2 February 2022**

As this competency requires candidates to have a thorough knowledge of RICS regulations and the Rules of Conduct, it is reasonable to expect candidates to have an awareness of the new Rules, but you should continue to assess candidates based on the current set of Rules and ethical standards until the effective date.

Candidates must not be referred solely, or in any part, based on the new Rules prior to 2 February 2022.

#### **Assessments after 2 February 2022**

From 2 February 2022, candidates must be tested on the new Rules. It is important to bear in mind that for some candidates there will be crossover between the current suite of documents and the new Rules.

If a candidate submits their written submissions prior to 2 February 2022, but is assessed after the effective date, you should take this into account during your review of their written submission and your assessment of the candidate.

If a candidate submits their written submissions after 2 February 2022, you must base your review of their written submission and your assessment on the new Rules.

Assessor training materials will be updated, and further guidance and support will be provided ahead of the effective date.

### **11) I am a Counsellor; how can I support candidates through the transition to the new Rules of Conduct?**

As an RICS-qualified professional, you will need to be familiar with the [new Rules of Conduct](#), the changes to the current guidance, and the effective date.

Your role as a *Counsellor* is to support the candidate to plan, monitor and develop their experience and to present this effectively in their written submissions. You should consider when the candidate is likely to submit and be assessed and ensure they are aware of the new Rules, the changes from the current Rules and the effective date.



For Chartered Assessment candidates you can also support them with possible questioning when preparing for the assessment interview.

**12) What is the impact on education providers, specifically RICS-accredited degrees?**

For a programme to meet the requirements for RICS-accreditation, we expect our current ethical standards to be woven through it; ideally the principles are embedded at an early stage, followed by the application of such as the programme develops.

Education providers must prepare for the change and begin to update their materials to reflect the new Rules of Conduct. This will be taken into consideration as part of the future re-accreditation of a programme.

**13) How does this impact existing apprenticeships in England?**

The Chartered Surveyor Degree Apprenticeship (CDSAs) includes an RICS-accredited degree with the RICS Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) as the end-point assessment.

The Level 3 Surveying Technician Apprenticeship includes an RICS-approved Level 3 Diploma with the Associate Assessment as the end-point assessment.

Accredited degrees (Level 6) must embed the RICS ethical standards. Education providers must prepare for the change and begin to update their materials to reflect the new Rules of Conduct. For approved diplomas (Level 3), providers will have to include additional content outside of the diploma to cover the new Rules.

**14) I am an apprentice and have been studying ethics. Does this change mean that I will have to learn a whole new set of things?**

No – the new Rules of Conduct incorporate the current RICS ethical principles. Candidates for the Associate and Chartered assessments will continue to be tested on the “Ethics, Rules of Conduct and professionalism” competency, and will need to understand the requirements to demonstrate it at your assessment.

Please refer to the candidate section of this document.

**15) I am a college working with apprentices. Do we have to get our course re-evaluated to include new content?**

No. Providers must prepare for the change and begin to update their materials where appropriate to reflect the new Rules of Conduct.



**16) Will any other training about the new Rules of Conduct be available?**

Yes. All candidates/members will have access to [free CPD](#) that explains the new Rules and outlines the key changes from the old Rules and Global Ethical Principles.

**17) Where can I find out more information?**

The online hub for the Rules of Conduct, supporting guidance and other materials is [here](#).

**18) Who should I contact if I have any further questions?**

The RICS Education and Qualification Standards policy team can help if you have any questions about the new Rules of Conduct in relation to entry and assessment to the profession – please email [globaleqs@rics.org](mailto:globaleqs@rics.org).